(b) whether Army top brass have finalized concept of Special Force Command and Government has given its go-ahead including of all important financial commitments;

(c) if so, what are details of proposed project prepared by Armed Forces for creation of Special Force Command; and

(d) by what time it is likely to be formed and to what extent it will be helpful to meet terrorist activities anywhere in the country?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) and (b) No proposal of a Special Forces Command under one umbrella has been formulated and these forces would normally operate under the Army Command.

(c>and (d) Does not arise in view of the reply given at (a) and (b) above.

Statehood to Pondicherry

825. SHRI C. PERUMAL: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is proposed to accord Statehood to Pondicherry;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI S. REGUPATHY): (a) to (c) Proposal made by the Government of Pondicherry for grant of Statehood with special category status is under consideration of the Government.

Network of Maoists and Naxalites

†826. SHRIMATI KUM KUMRAI: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the network of Maoists and Naxalites militants is rapidly expanding in the country;

(b) whether it is also a fact that it could endanger internal security of the country;

(c) whether Government identified the areas where Maoists and Naxalite terrorism is prevailing; and

†Original notice of the Question was received in Hindi.